Spain, the Star-Chamber and the Court of High Commission in the reign of the Stuarts in our own country, and the Tribunals in Paris in the Eeign of Terror, were as busily employed, and as potent, as the most righteous courts that ever sat in the same kingdoms. It is not conceivable that the conscience should ever cease to exist in the breast of any responsible agent; certain it is, that in man's present nature it often wields a tremendous energy. Misery never reaches its utmost intensity till it comes to be inflicted by the scourges of an accusing conscience.

Wickedness never becomes so unrelenting as when it seems to have received the sanction of moral law. What might otherwise have been a mere impulse of blind passion becomes now persevering and systematic villany or cruelty. Not imfrequently it assumes the shape of cool-blooded persecution, committed without reluctance and without remorse. The conscience now shows what had been its power for good if properly exercised, and how it can bear down and subordinate all the other and mere sympathetic feelings of the mind.

The cruelty inflicted in times of political convulsion furnishes a too apposite illustration. It becomes so great just because it has taken the name of justice, and seems to be the avenger of the trampled rights of men, whether of princes or people. Besides feelings of personal revenge, there has been an idea of supporting the rights of sovereigns, and the cause of social order, in those dreadful injuries which tyrants have inflicted on their subjects who, in fact or appearance, were disposed to rebellion. It was because they were esteemed the enemies of the liberties of the people that so many were hurried to the prison and the guillotine during the frenzy of the French Revolution ; and it is certain that some of the most prominent actors in the most atrocious scenes, such as Robespierre, were not naturally cruel. Oppression, whether exercised by the many or

the few, has never been intensely severe till it has assumed the name, and professes to assert and avenge the rights, of justice ; and it now becomes so unrelenting, just because it does everything in the name of law and conscience. We have heard of the bitterness of legalized tyranny, that is, of tyranny legalized by civil law; but this is nothing to the severity which claims to be consecrated by moral law.

The persecution becomes tenfold more bitter and unrelenting